

CRADLE CANNONS

MANNOCK BILLIARDS EXPOUNDED (1908?)

"The last... is Lovejoy's latest invention, the "cradle"It does not matter so much, as far as i can grasp of the situation, that the second object-ball be moved somewhat out of its original position, as does the red, or whichever ball is in that position, which appears to me to be the key to the system...Lovejoy can easily bring the second object-ball back again to where he desires it after a few strokes....The principal work is, however, done off the ball that lies on the top cushion, and Lovejoy found out the secret of keeping it at the desired angle with the cue ball by employing side. With this auxiliary he is able to cause the object to go about two inches whichever way he desires, and make the cannon at the same time. This is quite a new invention, and scientific billiards with a vengeance, and it has upset a lot of old theories..... It is absolutely necessary in employing side on the cue-ball to hit, as well, the object-ball accurately in order to keep the position, as the former, by its means, travels to the latter in a circuitous direction..... By the way, to assist me in making a correct diagram of the position, he cut a bit of foolscap paper to fit in the corner of the table. After the measurements had been taken, Lovejoy said, 'I believe i can play it in this' (meaning the paper),

'although it make a very fast cloth!'. Suiting his actions to his words, he made twenty cannons with the same ease as though he had been playing on the cloth.....After he had proved his mastery of the cradle cannon by turning the first object-ball (the red) half a ball's width, first on the right and then to the left, and then working it back to its original position, Lovejoy saidIn playing the cradle cannons, the first object-ball which gradually settles down by a cupping of the cloth does not move from its position. It merely shivers and keeps its place although making a complete vertical revolution once in approximately every 250 stroke..... This was observed during the course of the extraordinary world's record break made at Messrs. Burroughes and Watts' Saloon, Soho Square, London, WC. Then the professional player T Reece compiled 499,135 points almost exclusively by means of the cradle cannon.....:"

Mannock also shows a **drawing** of

"...Where Ives had the 2¼" balls outside the jaws of a 3¼" pocket when he scored a 2,540 break against Roberts...."

This small drawing is almost identical to the drawing showing **Lovejoy's** cradle cannon position.

RISO LEVI STROKES OF THE GAME 1910

" In January, 1907, Lovejoy created a sensation in the billiard world by making a break of 603, which contained 284 consecutive cannons, made by means of what afterwards became known as the double-kiss

cradle-cannon position. It is said that Lovejoy discovered the position and its potentialities in 1905, but that two years elapsed before he was able to work the balls into the proper position in the course of a public match. Be

that as it may, he had no sooner exploited the stroke in public than he began making breaks of 2,000 or more. Then Dawson, Cook, and Reece, and later on Williams and Aiken, set themselves to make huge breaks by means of the new stroke, and before long five-figure breaks became quite ordinary, and after Dawson had made a break of 23,769 and Cook one of 42,746, Reece was credited with a break of 499,135. Such scoring finally put an end to what by this time had become farcical billiards, and on September 2nd, 1907, a rule was passed by the Billiard Association which made a cradle-stroke cannon a foul. None but players of exceptional ability were able to score by means of cradle cannons, for only by the very greatest refinement of play was it possible to work the balls into the correct position. Once the balls were in position, however, it was an easy

enough matter for any good player to keep them there. The first few strokes had to be played with care, but as the break proceeded retention of the position became less and less difficult, and later on a good player could hardly lose the position except by an accident.... The cloth on which Reece is credited with having made a break of nearly half a million was on exhibition in several towns in England, and the cups in which the object balls had rested and the ruts in which the cue ball had travelled to and fro were quite plainly discernible, even when standing at a distance from the cloth....it began on June 3rd, 1907, and continued until July 6th....By the present-day rules, which allow twenty-five ball-to-ball cannons without the cue ball touching a cushion, the double-kiss cradle cannon becomes a legitimate stroke once more...."

TOM REECE DAINTY BILLIARDS 1925

"...Until the rule restricting the series of ball-to-ball shots to five-and-twenty came into force, i feel sure that i was going to roll up some new records. Unfortunately, i showed my hand too soon. The long string of 249,552 consecutive cannons in a break of 499,135 points, between July 3rd and 6th, 1907, which occupied 85 hours 49 minutes to tick off, ended my chances of ever again making full use of my close-cannon skill....Try as i would, and certainly did, to overcome this restriction i found it too heavy a handicap. When i made my record....i had the balls placed just outside the right top pocket, the red ball on the end cushion, the object-white on the side-cushion (both just clear of the "bumps") and the cue-ball in between..... Within my own memory there have been curious happenings concerned with

close-cannon strokes when the balls have been at the jaws of a pocket....The late John Roberts.... contested a compromise match with the then American champion, Frank C Ives, the "Napoleon" of the cue, as his admirers styled him, at Humphrey's Hall, Knights-bridge, LondonThere were 6 pockets to the table, each 3¼ inches (much smaller than the usual openings) at the "fall of the slate", and the balls were 2¼ inches (much larger than the regulation size) in diameter.... It was an interesting contest until Ives managed to work the balls to the mouth of the right top pocket, and, once having done this, ticked off cannons to his heart's content. A big set of balls and a small pocket enabled him to keep the balls moving about the "bumps", and to all intents and purposes prevented any of them going

in. *The American champion finally, and after he had made his position on the marking-board secure, purposely broke up the position--or he might have kept them there to the end of the one-sided match.*"

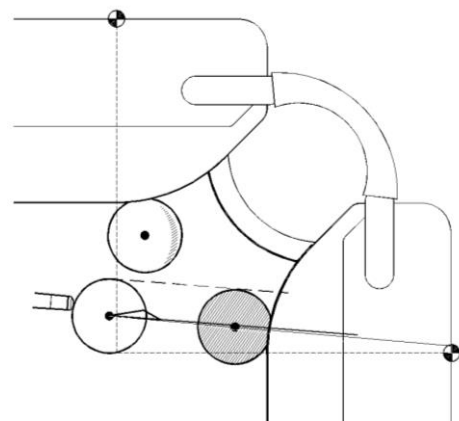
TOM shows a drawing of Ives' pozzys, showing the object-balls almost touching, just outside the bumps, equidistant from the centerline of the pocket. And it shows the qball grazing across both balls, from side to side, just az for a jam cannon, except that the qball never goes near a cush but keeps quite close to both balls. The drawing shows that the cannon grazes the white each shot, but haz some kiss-off effect off the red each shot. This could be poor drafting, or perhaps there woz some kiss-effect. I hav tried to emulate Ives on my home table. My pockets are 3½", and i uzed my set of

3⁷/₁₆" balls. I kan tell u that Ives did not make hiz cannons az stated by Reece or az stated by any of the other descriptions that i hav come across over the years. Praps Ives uzed a cradle-cannon for each shot, or for each second shot. In other words, he uzed a kiss-back some of the time, or all of the time. Ives could hav at times played the kiss-back by firstly grazing one ball before kissing-back off the second ball, instead of after. This sort of reverse cradle iz sometimes the best shot to play in a present day run, ie with 2¹/₁₆" balls. Perhaps Ives invented the cradle in 1893. Either that, or he uzed the Jam. Theoretically, it iz possible to graze across the two object-balls (az per Tom's drawing), & to repeat this ad-infinitum, but it iz also theoretically possible to score 75 consecutive cannons by belting all three balls around the table each shot.

IDEAL CRADLE

CRADLE 1 The red & yellow are a little inside the jaws. The qball-to-red line passes just left of the J-Spot (az shown). U aim just left-of-center on red, with a touch of left-side. The qball kisses back off red to kiss off yellow, stopping in the same spot each time. This iz the famous Cradle with which Tom **REECE** made hiz 499,135 break. The Cradle iz one of thozе old-time freak pozzys that hav a place in the modern game.

MUTATIONS The yellow might be a little further in or



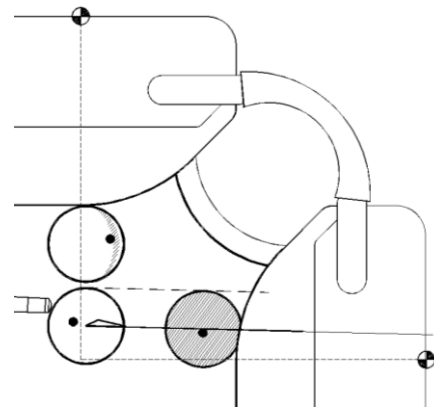
out, likewise the red. So that's 3 pozzys for each, so that's 9 possible mutations. The qball might be a little left or right, ie 3 attack angles, so that now givs us 27 possible (workable) mutations. Not counting another 1000 non-workable mutations. In this chapter we hav drawings of 10 of the 27, plus we hav 5 drawings showing detours. The Cradle iz better than the **JAM**. U don't havta worry about loozing the yellow. And it's a one-shot seqence, so u don't havta keep changing sides. But i suppose that u will havta stand up & stretch your back & arms. I naturally assume that all of my cradles (in all of these drawings) are all in the right top pocket. But there are **4 CORNER POCKETS**. In addition we hav 2 possible **MIRROR IMAGE** cradles in any corner pocket, but my drawings only ever show the one that suites a right hander. Its mirror image would of course suite a lefty. A player haz the uzual tools & decisions. She needs to chooz an **AIM** point on the red. Whether to shoot **PLAINBALL** or with a little or a lot of lhs or rhs. Whether to hit the qball at say 5 o'c or 7 o'c. Whether to uze **SWERV** or piqué or massé (alltho none of these is mentioned in the 15 drawings). Plus judgement of **STRENGTH**. **J-SPOT** I include the J-Spot in my drawings when needed (Corner J-Spots are explained in ch52). A player kan look/see whether the

qball-to-red line passes throo the J-Spot, or abit left or right. Az a general rule if a bit right then u need rhs (ie check), a bit left needs lhs (ie running). If the line passes throo the J-Spot then praps plainball iz ok.

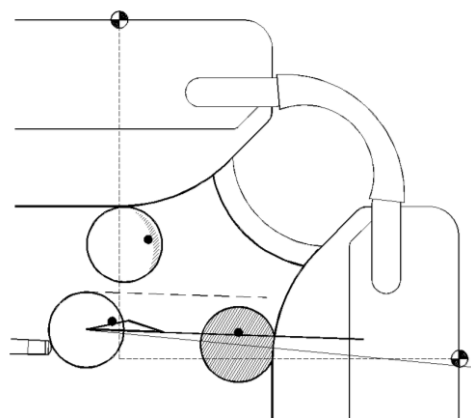
ESCAPE The angle of the jaw helps to keep the red anchored in ideal pozzy. Sidespin helps too. Cradles end when the red escapes (plus other blunders).

POOR POZZYS

CRADLE 2 Here the yellow iz just inside the tangent point of the jaw (ie it iz further out than the ideal yellow shown in Cradle 1) (shown by the dot). And the red iz further inside the jaw (compared to the ideal red shown in Cradle 1) (shown by the dot). The qball-to-red centreline passes well left of the J-Spot (az shown) (ie left from the player's view). The aim line iz fullball on red, ie it iz along the qball to red centreline (az shown). Each (RRYY) cradle cannon needs to ensure that the red's pozzy duznt get worse, & with good work gets better. Likewise for the yellow, except that it karnt improov (not here). Cradle 2 kan be played (i) thick on red with zero side (ie plainball)(not shown), or (ii) fullball on red with left-side (ie running here) (az shown), or (iii) $\frac{3}{4}$ ball on red with right-side (ie check side)(not shown). The best rezult iz i think gotten by (ii). The qball returns & stops where it started (but it would be better if it stopped a bit further out)(ie west).



CRADLE 3 Here the yellow iz az for Cradle 2 above. But the red iz further out than the ideal. The qball-to-red centerline passes just right of the J-Spot. The aim line iz left of center on red, uzing lots of check-side (ie rhs here). U should be able to improov the red, & hope that the yellow duznt get worse.



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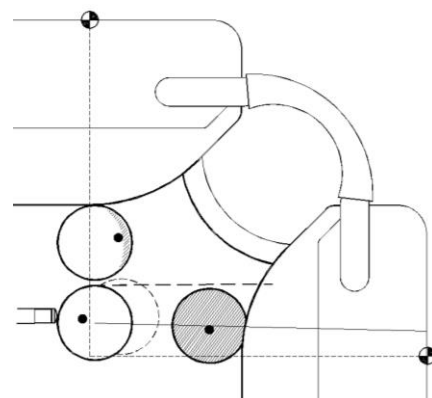
McConachy missed a winner..... Lindrum introduced a variety into his cannon play in a rather peculiar way. The two object balls were placed one on either shoulder of the top left pocket, & Lindrum made 18 kiss cannons in succession before either object ball was displaced.

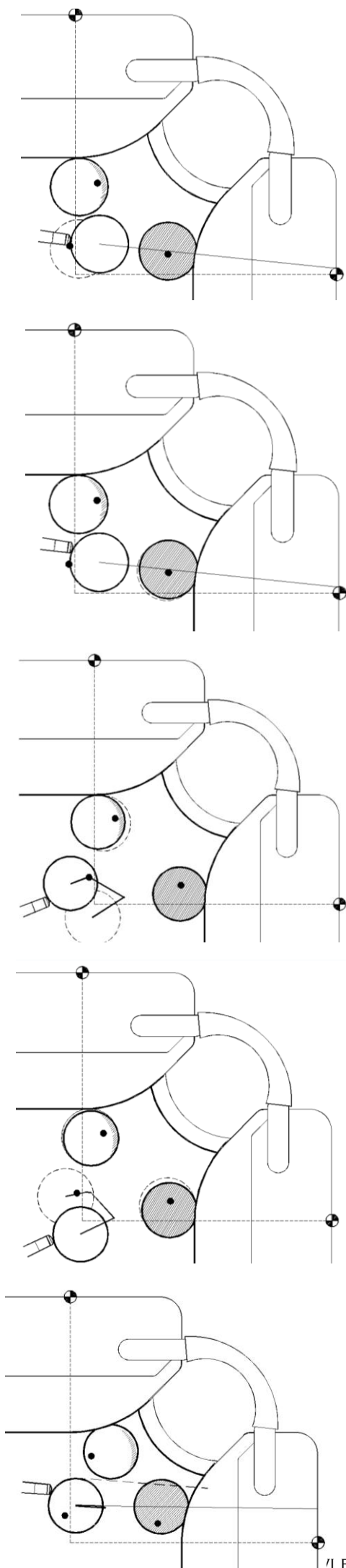
COMMENTS This must hav been a Cradle. Cradle woz obviously an oddity in 1930 due to the 35 limit on direct cannons, i think it required Ball-Cushion-Ball, obviously an impossibility with the Cradle or Jam. The Pendulum Jam could handle Cushion-Ball-Ball before they removed that ambiguity in the rules (which were never ambiguous).

2 SHOT CRADLE

CRADLE 4A (CRADLE 2 AGAIN)

U won't keep Cradle 2 up for long. Here, in 4A & 4B, we start with Cradle 2 pozzy (ie the red iz further in than ideal), but we uze a two-shot-sequence. In 4A (Shot 1) we aim further left on red (compared to Cradle 2), with little or no side-spin, hitting softly, to land thickish on yellow, stopping where shown by the broken ball, leeving 4B. If too cute u risk touching-balls.





CRADLE 4B Shot 2 iz a full-ball kiss-back, plainball, to leev 4A again, az shown by the broken ball. This 2-shot sequence iz eezyer than the 1-shot sequence in Cradle 2. It haz the risk of bumping yellow further out of the jaw, but probly no more so than the risk in Cradle 2.

IMPROOVING POZZY CRADLE 5 (4B AGAIN)

Here iz another strategy. Instead of playing the 2-shot cradle in 4A & 4B we jar the red out to better pozzzy by uzing left-side az shown. The qball probly stops back where it started, & with luck the red stops where shown by the broken ball. Then u kan go back to a standard 1-shot cradle, but u might hav to jar the red out a few times to achieve ideal pozzzy.

REVERSE CRADLE MOOVING YELLOW CRADLE 6A

Here iz Cradle 3 pozzzy again. But in 6A u get the red & yellow into better pozzzy. Cannon off yellow, thin, with a little running-side. This should coax yellow further into the jaw, az shown by the broken ball. To moov the yellow a long way u could play plainball, or hit yellow thicker. The qball stops where shown by the broken ball, to leev 6B.

MOOVING RED CRADLE 6B

U want to moov the red a little, but not too much. A thick half-ball with running-side should do it, leeving the three balls az per the broken balls. The leev might be like Ideal Cradle 1 (shown by the 3 black dots). If not u kan try again. U kan creep up to good pozzzy, u don't havta do it in one shot.

REVERSE CRADLE iz interesting. A 2-shot cradle sequence. I must hav a closer look one day.

TOO CLOSE CRADLE 7

Here the red & yellow are at the limit of cradle pozzzy. When the balls are close together its difficult to judge the needed contact, & u kan miss the cannon. The uzual stuff-up iz the double-hit foul. Trying to improov the pozzzy leads to a loss of the yellow. Best bet iz to try for the Jam.

A 303 BREAK CRADLE CANNON 8A

Here's how u can make a 303 break. This sequence woz suggested by Wozza, whilst flicking throo the first draft. U are kumming up to 70 cannons, so u then play a cannon to open up the pozzy, az follows. Play three-quarter-ball on red, with some left-side, az shown, to leev 8B pozzy. This might take more than one cannon if the red & yellow are very close together.

CRADLE CANNON 8B

Here u play inoff the red. U might havta uze some left-side or piqué, az shown. Be careful to leev red in a friendly pozzy, az shown in 8C. If an inoff red iz too difficult, play inoff yellow, or some other bridging cannon.

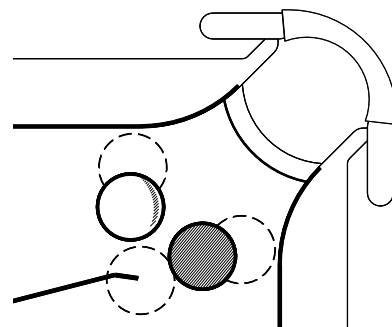
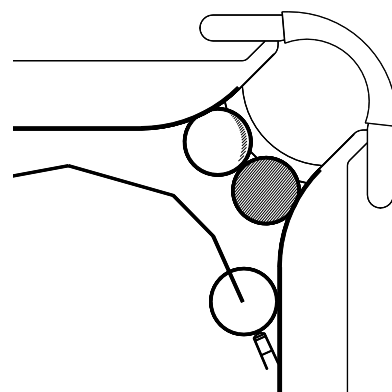
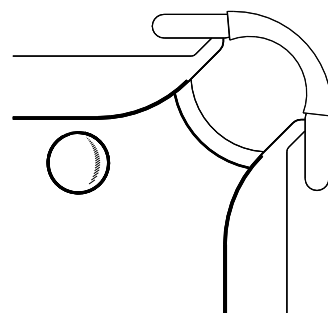
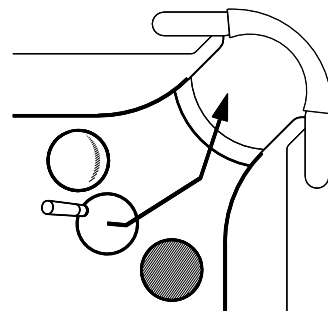
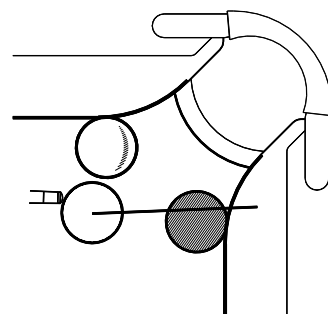
CRADLE CANNON 8C

The next stroke, 8C, iz a very long-range gathering-cannon from in-hand, played at dead pace. Here u will hav to know your table koz at slow pace the drift can be a halfball. A good gather will keep the red & yellow between the qball & the pocket. And no one the Cradle. And away u go again. Another 70 cannons, & then the same manipulation again, etc. U get up to 153 points per cycle. I hav done a similar 303 in practice. It's probably the eezyst way some of us are ever going to make a 300 break.

GETTING CRADLE

U are nursing the balls along the top cush towards the right top pocket. When near u have 4 cushion crawler options. **Option A** The Cradle. **Option B** The Jam. **Option C** Turn-the-corner (& get a Rocker on the side cush). **Option D** TurnAbout (to return along the top cushion). **CH31 JAM CANNONS** (see drawings Jam 6 to Jam 11) shows how to get the Jam (in effect our Option B above). There iz no real need for extra drawings here for our Cradle in Option A, (Jam 6 to Jam 11 suffice).

CRADLE 6A Here iz a different ploy. Here we hav the Jam, & we want to unjam them, to get the Cradle (or for some other reason). Firstly, play this 6A cannon hard to bring the red & yellow out almost one ball off the cush to giv the pozzy shown in 6B. The qball hits the top-cush (az shown) & then the side-cush & then stops near the right side cush (not good). But if u uze stun in 6A the qball will brake & will stop mid-table between theSpot & the Pyramid-Spot. The closer the qball stops to the centreline of the table the better (for a good angle & range for the cannon in 6B). U will tend to under-hit 6A, it haztabe hard to get the red & yellow well out. **CRADLE 6B** Here we play a soft long range gather **CANNON** az shown. This will be yellow-first or red-first, depending on the exact leev in 6B. And u get the leev shown by the 3 broken balls. And then u try for Cradle. If u stuff-up badly u might (in 6B) be able to play a **BABY INOFF** red into that pocket (not shown)(instead of the



planned gather cannon) to then leev a (back-up) **GATHER** from in-hand (& then try for the Cradle)(or the Jam). If u stuff-up the gather in 6B then here too u might be able to play a **BABY INOFF** to leev a long **GATHER** cannon from in-hand.

HOW I HOAXED LOVEJOY

RISO LEVI BILLIARDS IN LIGHTER VEIN (1920)

The cradle-stroke--sometimes also called the anchor-stroke---was discovered by the late W A Lovejoy who won the amateur championship in 1904 and became a professional in 1905. He first exploited it in 1907, but it had a comparatively short life, for after two or three other professionals had made gigantic breaks by its means, the rule which led to its abolition came into force. Only a gifted player could work the balls into position for the stroke. Indeed, the surpassing skill and the delicacy of touch which were necessary for the setting up of the position were possessed by but few of our professionals. If, however, the correct position was set up by hand, the case was very different. A good touch was required even then for the making of a respectable number of cannons, but with a little practice any amateur who was good enough for an occasional three-figure break could play the stroke all right. Indeed, no very great care was necessary after the first 15 or 20 strokes, for the two object balls gradually settled in the cloth, and when the run of cannons was long continued, pronounced hollows or cups were formed under the object balls. After a very little while, the object balls rocked in these hollows every time the cue ball came in contact with them, and only as the result of a somewhat careless stroke could either of them be induced to come out of the little depressions in which it rested. As many players of to-day do not know precisely what the cradle-stroke position is, i have illustrated it on the diagram. I had some practice at the stroke---i used to place the balls in correct position for it before i began---and i very soon acquired such mastery of it that i could make two or three hundred cannons before i broke down as the result of a careless stroke or a miscue. Bending down continuously whilst making a very long run of these delicate cannons makes your back ache, and so, unless you stand up for a short rest after every fifty or hundred strokes you are very apt to make a careless one. When i was able to make several hundred of these cradle cannons one of the staff of the "Manchester Evening Chronicle" came up to my house to witness me make a thousand break by its means. At my first attempt i made a break of 800 odd and then miscued. As i had failed to make 1,000 i was requested to have another try there and then, but as an amendment i proposed that we should have a few games of billiards, and that if desired i would have another go at it at the end of the evening. The second attempt proved quite successful, but when i reached four figures i was pressed to continue, and i added a further 400 odd before i miscued. A few days later a column article on the stroke, illustrated by diagrams supplied by me, appeared in the "Chronicle". The following week i was in Glasgow. A famous London Billiards firm has a branch house in Sauchiehall Street, and as i was very friendly with its manager i looked in one morning just before noon to have a chat with him. We had barely exchanged greeting when he said :

"Dawson and Lovejoy are upstairs, and i believe the latter is showing the cradle-stroke to a few gentlemen. He was just placing the balls in

position when i came down half a minute ago. Would you like to go upstairs and watch him, and then come back to me ?"

I thanked him for his suggestion and went upstairs at once. When i entered the room Lovejoy was still at the stroke, and was surrounded by a little knot of very interested spectators while Dawson stood a little away from the others. I had never met Lovejoy before, but i knew Dawson, so i made a sign to him not to say a word, and then i went close up to Lovejoy, and after watching him make about half a dozen strokes i exclaimed in the most simple voice at my command :

"Is this the wonderful cradle-stroke about which i have read so much of late?"

Lovejoy looked up for a moment and replied :

"Yes, this is it," and then bent down again and continued at the stroke.

I watched him make a few more cannons and then in the same kind of voice as before i said :

"It looks very simple." "D'you think so ?" replied Lovejoy as he looked up again. "Yes, i do." "D'you think you could make a dozen cannons from this position ?" "Yes, i feel almost certain i could."

As a matter of fact, i was quite positive of it, for the manner in which the object balls had rocked whilst Lovejoy was making the cannons had proved to me that many hundreds of them had been made in that particular corner of the table, and that the ball were resting in such relatively deep cups that no very delicate touch or accurate contact was necessary for the retention of the position.

"Would you like to have a try?" continued Lovejoy, as, with a smile on his face, he offered me his cue. "Thanks very much," i said, and as i took the cue i noticed that several of the spectators were smiling amusedly in anticipation of my quickly making a mess of the position, and of my discomfiture in discovering that i could only make two or three cannons, notwithstanding that it had all seemed so very simple to me when i had been a spectator.

It was a cold day in early February, and i was wearing a heavy overcoat and thick gloves, but i bent down to the stroke just as i was without removing even one glove. The balls were so set that i quickly made a dozen cannons and could have gone on indefinitely had not Lovejoy caught hold of my arm and pulled me away.

"Here, that'll do," said he with a laugh. "You've been pulling my leg, What d'you mean coming in here, and talking simple-like after you've been practising my stroke for hours ?"

And then i told him that although the making of a considerable number of these cannons presented no difficulty to any fair player when once the correct position had been set up, the working of the balls into this position during the course of a game demanded the acme of refinement in execution, and that only a player of surpassing skill and possessed of an exquisite delicacy of touch could possibly manipulate the object balls into their correct locations for a sequence of cradle cannons. I also told him that i had never yet seen this done, and that i would take it as a great personal favour if he would show me how he worked the balls into position during a game.

"Well, it's no certainty," replied Lovejoy, "but I'll do my best to show you how it's done."

And as he spoke he placed the three balls in close-cannon position against the side cushion about a foot or so from the corner pocket, and then by means of perhaps a dozen cannons he ran the ball along the cushion to the vicinity of the pocket, and with two or three more dainty little strokes he had the balls in perfect position. It was a wonderful achievement. I thanked him for his kindness, and complimented and congratulated him on his great skill. For what he had shown me was a far more marvellous thing than the getting of even twenty thousand cannons from the set position would have been. And as i went downstairs i wondered how many hours Lovejoy had devoted to the perfection of play required to set up the cradle-cannon position after he had first discovered it and recognized its potentialities.....

TOM REECE CANNONS & BIG GUNS 1928

Half a million up! That's some game, as the Americans would say, & i had to play it soon after i had borrowed the Anchor Stroke from its discoverer, W A Lovejoy, the famous amateur..... it only took me a week to learn how to nurse the balls into the requisite position in the jaws of the pocket. Having done this i naturally saved up the resultant surprise packet for my old opponent, Melbourne Inman. We were playing a match while there was still much excited comment in the billiards world over Lovejoy's new stroke. Many people maintained that the position could not be obtained at will & nobody dreamed that i had already mastered the secret. It may be imagined, therefore, what excitement there was when i got the position in one of the early sessions & ran to points with three or four hundred unfinished. When the next session came round people were paying a pound a head to get into the hall. I put on one hundred after another until i had passed the 900 mark & had, incidentally, set up a new world's record in professional billiards. In those days, it should be remembered, the four-figure break was regarded as a practical impossibility. But, having once lost my position, it happened that i never got it again

during that particular match &, in trying to do so, i flung away my chances & Inman actually beat me!

History always has a tendency to repeat itself. It was upon Inman again that i sprung the pendulum-cannon surprise when we were playing in the Championship in 1927, & once again, after making a startling break by means of this stroke, i lost position & never recovered it, Inman winning the match.....

.... as regards the anchor cannon itself, there was probably no man in England quite so sick of it as i was before the authorities put a stop to it. And i had some excuse for that, for it was by means of this stroke that i made the world's record break of 499,135 unfinished!.... I got the Anchor position in the first session when i had scored 865, & i never lost it. I went on playing the same stroke for five solid weeks &, as admission was free to the public, there was a large gathering on every occasion, both afternoons & evenings... Another curious feature about this match was that, although there were set times to begin at, 3 & 8, there were no set times to finish. I used to reel off 1000 after 1000. The anchor stroke is a very trying one to play, as one has to lean over the table

& after an hour or two the position has something the effect of a kidney punch. If i had not been very fit physically i could never have stood the strain.

When this nightmare break had been in progress for some days it used to amuse me to play the spectators out of the room. I suppose i was scoring at the rate of 3000 an hour roughly & usually most of the crowd would tip-toe out of the hall after they had seen me make a couple of thousand or so.

One evening i had played'em all out except half a dozen & i must have been nearing the 8000 mark for that session. I was quite ready to have a rest myself, but i grew obstinate. 4 of the last 6 left before i had completed another 2000 -- one more 1000 shifted the fifth. He crept out as silently as a mouse, but the last of the half-dozen refused to budge. He was sitting right in the back row of the seats & i couldn't help admiring the way he stuck it out. But i am a bit of a sticker myself & i wouldn't give in, not even

for the sake of the weary marker, the tired referee, or my bored opponent. I rattled up another 1000 & the man was still there -- still another, & he made no sign of moving. Then i stopped play & walked around to where he was sitting. He was fast asleep & perfectly happy. We broke up the session without waking him & i think he must have been found by the cleaners in the morning. On two occasions i played all night & there was a constant stream of spectators coming & going. Several of the boys came round from the Vaudeville Club, Eugene Stratton, Paul Martinetti, Arthur Reece, the Brothers McNaughten & others. There were several intervals for refreshments, & even i was not too anchored to the table to enjoy them. I ought to add that George Reid of the Sporting Life watched the break from start to finish, & i am inclined to think his job was harder than my own. At all events, he stuck it out like a Briton.

TOM REECE'S RECORD BREAK

By Peter Ainsworth & Jock McGregor English Amateur Billiards Ass website

This website haz lots of historical stuff -- re the Cradle Cannon the above article mentions that..... The possibilities were known to have been demonstrated by Frank Ives during a visit to London in 1892 when he stayed with JP Mannock at the Victoria Hotel. In January 1907 Lovejoy made a break of 603 including 283 consecutive cannons, versus Cecil Harveson. In February Reece had a break of 1825 versus Inman, & another of 1269. In March Lovejoy had a break of 2257 versus W Pindar. By April Dawson had a break of 7184, while in the same week Tom Aiken had 7172 unfinished, in a game of 16,000 up. Dawson then had 23,769 unfinished, in a game of 25,000 up. Reece had a break of 40,001 unfinished, versus Joe Chapman. In June Cook had a break of 42,746, versus Alec Taylor, when he failed to cannon by the merest shade. In June & July 1907 Reece made hiz break of 499,135 unfinished, in 500,000 up, versus Joe Chapman. Reece gave a demonstration that each of the object-balls revolves around its axis once in every 500 or 600 cannons. At a special meeting in September 1907, it woz rezolved that the cradle cannon be barred.

THE BILLIARDS PLAYER

The Nov 1953 issue haz a Burroughes & Watts photo of the balls&pocket of Reece's actual pozzey, taken at that time. The article sez.....

He made 249,552 cannons, and on an average scored 10,000 at a session. Orthodox sessions were at 3 and 8. Harry Tate did a sketch with a curtain-fall in it, after which Reece was seen with hoary white beard, the table area, apart from the cannon space, was covered in cobwebs, and Chapman, also bearded, lay snoring. The "hero" of the occasion received an extra cheque of 135 pounds for his pains. The refusal of an official Certificate by the Billiards Association was simply due to the fact that the public were not present at many

sessions (though George Reid, of "The Sporting Life" was stated to have seen the whole break, and he lived to tell the tale) but it was expressly stated by the governing body that not the slightest imputation was cast on Reece's integrity.. Tom Reece was born at Oldham on August 12 1873.... passed away at his home at Lancing, Sussex on Friday 16 October 1953.....it is good to know that even at eighty he had just returned from a successful visit to Australia, and the picture i received of Tom showed him looking a debonair sixty....

I hav i think the same photo, i uze it az a bookmark in my copy of Reece's book -- Dainty Billiards -- it iz of Tom and hiz wife, and Wally iz in the background, the mark on the back sez Geelong.