



# Wm. F. Drueke & Sons, Inc.

601 Third Street, N. W.  
GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN

## SAMUEL RESHEVSKY, THE CHILD PRODIGY (as written by the late) MR. WM. F. DRUEKE, SR.

My first knowledge of Sammy Reshevsky; when news came from Warsaw during the German army occupation of World War I, that Sammy at the age of seven out-played the German officers, he made international news. He was so small a box was necessary for him to stand on to see the Chess board.

The report was that Sammy was watching the German army officers playing Chess when one turned down his King and admitted his defeat. Sammy, who could not talk German, set up the King, made a move and won the game that made him a "Knight of the Round Table" in the German army.

After the war, Sammy made a tour being received by the royalty of Belgium, Holland, Denmark and England. He also played in Paris, France. He received so many gold medals, the weight of which was too great for him to wear while playing.

When he arrived in New York he received a royal welcome with all the fan-fare of a hero. His first exhibition in this country was at the Lexington Theater, playing 20 simultaneously to a packed theater.

I, being the only manufacturer of a line of Chessmen in this country at that time, became interested in him, not only as a business promotion of the game, but his ability to interest people that had never played the game. (To illustrate this point)--I was invited to witness an exhibition at the University Club in New York City. Sammy played 20 members of the club simultaneously. Not expecting much of an audience the club placed 50 chairs for spectators. The play started at 8:00 PM and a great many members dropped in just to take a look at the boy wonder, most of them in evening clothes with their overcoat on their arm. Two hundred and seventy-six, actual count, stood up until 10:30 PM watching Sammy defeat all of the players. The members that stood up were dumb-founded when they discovered the time.

The playing was done in clubs until I suggested trying department stores. When this was tried out with Strawbridge and Clothier in Philadelphia it was a tremendous success. It took 37 policemen to handle the crowd.

The next milestone was in Cleveland where Sammy defeated 20 players including the Ohio Chess champion. A lady Chess devotee witnessed the game and at the completion she interviewed Sammy, she was so overcome with the child's beautiful eyes she offered Sammy \$100.00 for a



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kiss. Sammy replied, "It is my move, I will do it for fifty." He made front page headlines in every city that he played in.

I acted as his advance agent and he played two games in every large city west of Chicago, one in a store and one in a club. Starting in Chicago and playing at the Fair Store, it took 44 police to take care of the crowd.

A certain Dr. Wise in Minneapolis, a Chess enthusiast, bought rights and arranged a spectacular exhibition of living Chessmen. He rented the Coliseum in St. Paul, at that time the largest building in the twin cities. He had a 62 Ft. square Chess board. The Pawns were boys dressed as soldiers, the pieces were dressed as when Knighthood reigned supreme--the King as a KING, Queen as a QUEEN, Bishop as a BISHOP. The Knights on wooden horses and the Rook as a Castle. Sammy played against the Minneapolis Chess Club, they were on horse back and directed the play.

From that time on, it was not a question of selling the proposition to the stores, it was a question--who I would give it to.

**Note:**

( This is as far as Mr. Drueke had recorded on his relations with Sam Reshevsky, up to the time of his death.)

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